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EGGS ALL THE YEAR ROUND

Radio talk by Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, delivered through NBC noon-hour chain 1:23 to 1:30 p. m., E. S. T., Friday, October 19, 1928.

In the market discussion you have been told of fresh eggs and eggs in storage, you have been told that there is a surplus at the present time.

It is an interesting story how those concerned with the production and marketing of eggs have evened up the available supply and made possible eggs at all seasons at reasonable prices. Two-thirds of the eggs are produced in early spring and summer. The better geographic distribution of the poultry industry, making use of the Pacific coast with its mild climate for production of winter eggs, the use of the refrigerator car to bring them across to us in fresh condition, and refrigeration of our own abundant supply during the spring and summer, gives us now eggs all the year round, and quality eggs, if they are properly handled.

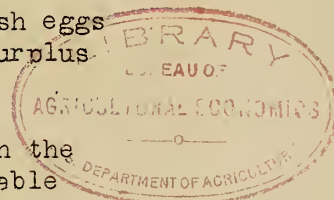
With proper care and refrigeration from the farm to the consumer, there is no reason why satisfactory eggs cannot be had wherever transportation and refrigeration are available.

The housewife should remember, however, that she has her part to play and that whether the egg is a fresh egg from her own flock or from the grocery or whether it has been transported or stored, she must give it proper care after it reaches home. Eggs do not require a very low temperature and they will keep satisfactorily on the middle shelf of the food compartment in the usual side-icer type of refrigerator, or the bottom of the top icer. She should demand quality eggs at all times.

There is probably no one food material which has so frequent or so varied use in the home as eggs. First of all, there are eggs as eggs. They lend themselves to much variety in preparation and the food value is so high that they are popular for themselves and may frequently be used without the family tiring of them. Let's discuss the food value first.

The real purpose of eggs is not for food but to produce baby chicks. So we have in the sealed package all the building material which is necessary for the development of the young chicken, along with some of the energy necessary in producing these, and vitamins to control the process. It is not strange, then, that eggs take a place near the top in the list of body-building foods. They contain efficient protein which helps build muscle economically--not much from one egg, but enough to count, and just twice as much in two. As to minerals, it is particularly valuable in iron, especially in the yolk, and contains all the vitamins A, B, C, and D. It is especially important as a source of A and D.

Another point worth considering for those counting the calories is that the egg doesn't contribute so much in the way of calories as some other foods. We do not eat eggs for



calories. We can supply the calories from cheaper sources for those who need them.

In discussing their use, let's start with eggs as eggs. There are many ways to prepare just eggs: coddled, boiled, poached, shirred, and fried. The tiny youngster will take hers coddled, that is, slowly cooked in water just below the boiling point so the egg just sets in a jelly-like consistency. She takes it early in life a very small amount at a time, possibly just a little added to her milk or cereal at first. It supplements the iron in the diet and may be used to supplement the cod liver oil. Dad will probably want his fried. Though it is probably somewhat more difficult to digest in that form his digestion can probably stand it and you may as well give in if he likes it that way and most dads do. Then you may want more fancy egg dishes to serve for luncheon and for supper - omelets, souffles, escalloped, or stuffed eggs and a larger group served a la something, which usually means a fancy sauce.

In addition, most housewives need eggs each day for cooking. These, of course, contribute to the diet just the same as the eggs as such. There is probably no one food material which has so many uses in cooking. In cakes, we beat air into the white to leaven the cake. In angel and sponge cakes no baking powder is necessary because of the amount of air that is added in this way. In cooking the air expands, the cake rises, then the egg white sets or hardens and holds in the air, making the cake light. In butter cakes eggs are just as essential. A no-egg cake is a pretty poor affair. A judicious combination of fat and egg gives crispness to fried cakes, fritters and waffles.

Icings are mostly made with a basis of egg. Either the white or the yolk may be used, though the white is used more frequently, with added sugar or sirup. The meringue on top of our pies is of egg white and sugar.

Then we may use them for thickening. Custards and sauces thickened with eggs are the best examples of this. You have your soft custard and your baked custard, depending upon the amount of egg used and the method of cooking. Salad dressings are thickened with egg, either cooked as in custard or used as a means of emulsifying oil as in the mayonnaise dressings. Croquettes, meat balls, and other fried foods sometimes need a special preparation to prevent them from absorbing fat. Eggs are especially valuable here. If these mixtures, after being formed into balls or cakes, are dipped into egg it coagulates and forms a nice, hard coat which prevents the absorption of fat and adds crispness to the product.

Many cooks save the egg shells and put them into boiled coffee to help clear it. This is possible since the egg white surrounds the coffee grounds when it coagulates on boiling, collecting these small particles and making it possible to strain them out. Fancy cooks make use of the same principle in clearing soups. Egg white is stirred into the cold soup, which is then heated to boiling. As it coagulates it collects the small particles which would be difficult to separate otherwise.

As you can well see, eggs are not only valuable in contributing to the diet, but in making possible many delicacies that would not otherwise be available. The housewife should appreciate them, use them in large quantities during the seasons when they are cheapest, and during those seasons when there is a difference in price distribute her use between the fresh and the storage egg, remembering the storage egg has all the food value of the fresh egg and will be made a quality product if she demands it.